

MAYOR AND COUNCIL STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA SUBCOMMITTEE
RIO NUEVO/DOWNTOWN, ARTS, CULTURE AND HISTORY
ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION REPORT AND SUMMARY
Thursday, August 16, 2007

Chair Trasoff called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m. in the Mayor & Council Chambers of City Hall, 255 W. Alameda, 1st Floor, Tucson, Arizona.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Council Member Nina Trasoff, Subcommittee Chair, Ward 6
Council Member Jose Ibarra, Ward 1
Council Member Steve Leal, Ward 5

STAFF LIAISON PRESENT: Greg Shelko, Downtown Development Director

AGENDA ITEM/MAYOR AND COUNCIL ACTION	STAFF ACTION
<p>1. Call to Order</p> <p>Chair Trasoff called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m.</p>	
<p>2. Call to the Audience</p> <p>Michael Toney spoke about TIF financing, the downtown hotel and new arena.</p> <p>Jack Strausburg commented that Rio Nuevo is based on Tucson growing and he would prefer that Tucson be economically feasible without growth.</p> <p>Dave Croteau, Mayoral Candidate for the Green Party echoed Mr. Strausburg's concerns about growth and supports sustainable development.</p>	
<p>3. 4th Avenue Underpass Progress</p> <p>Jim Glock, Director of Transportation provided an update on the project and said that based upon input of stakeholders, new non-structural aesthetic features have been proposed for the underpass.</p> <p>Paul Weiner from the Design Build Collaborative presented the underpass features that were designed to use materials in their most natural state (steel, concrete, brick and vegetation) and is recommending quality material and design. In his opinion, painting over the material would undermine the intention of the project. Chair Trasoff wanted to know how much material is removed each time a wall is sandblasted (as opposed to painting over it)? He response was that erosion of the wall is minimal, but there's a cost associated with maintenance and it's a discussion that needs to occur between the public and private sector.</p>	

AGENDA ITEM /MAYOR AND COUNCIL ACTION

STAFF ACTION

<p>Council Member Leal felt there needs to be a balance between attractiveness and O&M because part of the goal is to make downtown an interesting and comfortable destination and if spending money to bring thousands of people downtown is a problem, that's a problem we want to have.</p> <p>Chair Traosff asked for visual samples along with the associated costs to be provided when the alternatives are presented. Mr. Glock said staff is considering Mr. Weiner's suggestions; however, there are constraints with respect to vegetation and materials and the reality is that O&M costs need to be considered, but staff will sort these things out.</p> <p>Council Member Leal acknowledged that there's a project schedule, but asked if the aesthetic features had to be decided now and said it might be better to wait. Mr. Glock said the Broadway interchange was an example of where waiting enabled them to reflect on the project before installing the tiles which is now a world class entry into downtown and said the project team will consider comments made during the finalization of design.</p>	
<p>4. Streetscape Update</p> <p>Shane Smith of Rob Paulus Architect presented the different types of materials and designs that would be used throughout the downtown. Three mock-ups are planned in the near future for people to see and possibly vote on.</p> <p>Council Member Leal stated that in neighborhoods where buildings are different there needs to be a common thread running through it; therefore he would prefer a diversity of patterns as opposed to materials. Ms. Smith said they see the landscaping as the common thread and because the downtown has different districts, they think different materials can be used. For example, they see Toole Avenue as being artistic and Congress Street as historic in design.</p> <p>Council Member Ibarra stated that the design should be left up to the businesses and that Mayor & Council should be focusing on larger issues. Chair Trasoff agreed; however, they should set the vision and direction to ensure continuity for the project.</p>	

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<p>5. Status of East and West Side Land Disposition Activity</p> <p><u>Hotel Request for Proposals in Convention Center Area</u></p> <p>Richard Singer, Tucson Convention Center Director updated the subcommittee on the evaluation process for the project. He handed out a list of the five companies that have been asked to develop proposals, which are due September 7th. At that time the Mayor and Council and the community will be able to comment. Staff is still developing the selection process.</p> <p><u>Vacant Land Redevelopment Request for Qualifications on the West Side</u></p> <p>Ann Vargas, Community Services' Downtown Housing Ambassador, presented on the project. Three companies (Gadsden, TJ Bednar and Williams and Dames) were interviewed. All have different ideas for multi-use facilities including commercial and residential. The most exciting part is how the streetcar will come around and create some connectivity. Letters will be going out to the short list next week asking them to submit their proposals in November.</p>	
<p>6. Future Agenda Items</p> <p>None discussed.</p>	
<p>7. Adjournment</p> <p>Chair Trasoff adjourned the meeting at 5:52 p.m.</p>	